

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

The old Khmer-Annam struggle has been transferred from the political to the economic field. The small scattered Khmer population has neither the physical nor psychological force to resist the Annaioite inroads, nor to develop its own country. Not that the Khmer is entirely without guile, for a disarming gentleness often covers up opportunism, but it is never aggressive like the Annamites⁵. The Khmer is so permeated with Buddhistic passivity and imaginative fantasy that he is no match for his more realistic neighbours who are coming to colonize the rich redlands of Cambodia. The Khmers want protection by the French from this new menace of their old enemy. But it is inherent in the nature of colonization for the country to be developed—if the French cannot use the local people then they must encourage those best qualified, even at the cost of destroying the indigenous population. Incidentally the name "protectorate" thus becomes a farce. Its irony would be greatly augmented if the Annamites brought with them the germs of 'Communism, that would destroy not only Khmer resistance, but French sovereignty as well. The budget is fed almost exclusively by direct taxations. Indirect taxes are intermittent and irregular, depending too often on the degree of cordiality between the Governor-General and the Resident Superior of 'Cambodia rather than upon the country's needs. The tax on paddy, the oMest and most important of direct taxes, is based on produce and on the land itself. Though it naturally has lent itself to fraud it was related directly to income. When this tax was supressed in 1924 and replaced by a land tax, all the defects of the old and none of its advances were retained. Its essential unfairness is due to the lack of land surveying. Cambodia had no tax registers akin to the

Annamite

by even a vague accuracy might be approximated. More of the revenues should be allotted to medical and social service and to works, related to the country's needs and development.

On the administrative side the Khmers feel that France tends to act as if it were an annex of Cochinchina. Its needs are made entirely different from those of Annamite countries to young and inexperienced functionaries to those who have had experience without marked success in countries. Cambodia has been the Cinderella of the Union, the Kinois complain so much more gently

neighboring»
In the provincial Councils were in 1933, only few be restored, as in Annam* after the Year of
360